

Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: UNHRC, SHUM
SUBJECT: 34TH HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION: DEBATE ON
SOUTHERN AFRICAN ISSUES

SUMMARY. DEBATE ON SOUTHERN AFRICAN ISSUES DURING
FEBRUARY 15 AND 16 WAS CHARACTERIZED BY STRONG AFRICAN
CRITICISM OF U.S. AND OTHER WESTERN ECONOMIC-COMMERCIAL-
NUCLEAR TIES WITH SOUTH AFRICA WHICH PORTRAYED AS
UNDERMINING WESTERN CREDIBILITY ON HUMAN RIGHTS
ADVOCACY. ISRAEL ALSO CAME IN FOR CRITICISM FOR ITS
RELATIONSHIP WITH SOUTH AFRICA. SOVIETS, GDR AND
CUBANS AND ARABS EXPLOITED ALL OF THE AFRICANS
CRITICISMS IN THEIR ARGUMENTS. U.S. WILL SPEAK
FEBRUARY 17. END SUMMARY.

1. AFTERNOON OF FEBRUARY 15 AND ALL DAY OF 16TH THE
HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION WERE TAKEN WITH DEBATE FOCUSING
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LARGELY ON AGENDA ITEMS 6 AND 7 RE WORKING GROUP
REPORT ON HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN SOUTHERN AFRICA
AND REPORT OF SPECIAL RAPPORTEUR (KHALIFA, EGYPTIAN)
ON ADVERSE CONSEQUENCES FOR HUMAN RIGHTS IN SOUTH
AFRICA OF (WESTERN) MILITARY, ECONOMIC, POLITICAL AND
OTHER FORMS OF "ASSISTANCE."

2. FIFTEEN COUNTRIES AND TWO OBSERVER DELEGATIONS HAVE SPOKEN SO FAR. U.S. POSTPONED ITS SPEECH TO PERMIT DEPARTMENT CLEARANCE OF STATEMENT TO FEBRUARY 17. HOWEVER, CARRYOVER OF BACKLOG OF THREE SPEAKERS FROM FEBRUARY 16 MAY WELL POSTPONE US TO MONDAY.

3. DEBATE FOLLOWED PREDICTABLE LINES AND PRODUCED NO SURPRISES. HOWEVER TEDIUM WAS LEAVENED WITH TENSION BECAUSE OF DEPTH OF AFRICAN EMOTIONS ON THE ISSUES UNDER DISCUSSION. ALL AFRICANS WHO HAVE SPOKEN (NIGERIA, SENEGAL, LESOTHO, OAU AND "AZANIA" PAN AFRICAN CONGRESS OBSERVERS) COMMONLY CHALLENGED CREDIBILITY OF WESTERN AND ESPECIALLY U.S. SINCERITY IN ADVOCACY OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND VERBAL CRITICISM OF APARTHEID. WESTERN CREDIBILITY WAS CHALLENGED IN LIGHT OF WESTERN REFUSAL TO ENACT ECONOMIC AND COMMERCIAL SANCTIONS AGAINST SOUTH AFRICA, INCLUDING AN END TO NUCLEAR COOPERATION. A SECONDARY THEME OF CRITICISM (NIGERIA, SENEGAL, LESOTHO) WAS AIMED AT U.S. REFUSAL TO ACCEPT "LEGITIMACY OF ARMED STRUGGLE" WHICH SEEN AS INCONSISTENT WITH: (A) SOUTH AFRICAN WHITES CRUSHING OF PEACEFUL OPPOSITION; (B) WEST'S WAR AGAINST NAZIS WHOSE DOCTRINES WERE PARALLEL WITH APARTHEID AND (C) U.S. ARMED REVOLT AGAINST BRITISH TO ACHIEVE INDEPENDENCE.

4. ISRAEL RECEIVED AMPLE CRITICISM BECAUSE OF HER LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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LINKS WITH SOUTH AFRICA FROM AFRICANS--NIGERIANS NOTED RECENT VISIT OF ISRAELI ECONOMIC DELEGATION TO JOHANNESBURG--AND ESPECIALLY FROM ARABS WHO ASSERTED THERE WAS A "LAAGER MENTALITY" SIMILARITY BETWEEN APARTHEID AND ZIONISM.

5. SOVIETS'(ZORIN) STATEMENT WAS LENGTHY LITANY OF ABOVE THEMES UNDER UMBRELLA ACCUSATION OF "WESTERN POLICY OF CONNIVANCE WITH SOUTH AFRICA." PARTICULAR STRESS ON: (A) WESTERN ECONOMIC INVOLVEMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA; (B) "NEOCOLONIALIST SOLUTIONS" FOR ZIMBABWE AND NAMIBIA, WHICH "LEGITIMATE" PEOPLE'S MOVEMENTS WILL THWART; (C) IMPORTANCE OF NOING AHEAD ON IMPLEMENTATION OF CONVENTION ON "CRIME" OF APARTHEID.

6. SPEAKING LATER, GDR AND CUBANS PLAYED EVEN MORE HARSHLY ON THE SAME THEMES. GDR ADDED A SPECIFIC SUGGESTION THAT THIS HRC SUBMIT THE KHALIFA REPORT TO THE NEXT UNGA AND INCLUDE "A CATALOGUE OF CONCRETE MEASURES" THAT MIGHT "CONTRIBUTE" TO REMOVAL OF "RACIST REGIMES" IN SOUTHERN AFRICA. CUBANS GRATUITOUSLY SNIPED AT U.S. FOR TREATMENT OF ITS RACIAL MINORITIES,

NOTABLY INCLUDING INDIANS.

7. AFRICANS ARE DEVELOPING RESOLUTIONS ON ITEMS 6 AND 7, WHICH WERE CENTRAL SUBJECT OF FEBRUARY 15 AND 16 DEBATES , AS WELL AS ITEMS 14 (IMPLEMENTATION OF APARTHEID CONVENTION) AND 18 (DECADE AGAINST RACISM AND RACIAL DISCRIMINATION) THE LATTER TWO QUESTIONS WERE GROUPED WITH THE SOUTHERN AFRICAN ISSUES BUT HAVE SO FAR RECEIVED LITTLE ATTENTION. WE WILL SEND BY SEPTTEL THOSE TENTATIVE DRAFTS AVAILABLE TO US. VOTING SCHEDULED TO TAKE PLACE MONDAY, FEBRUARY 20 BUT MAY WELL BE POSTPONED A DAY OR TWO. VANDEN HEUVEL

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